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FROM: Accra

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 543, March 16, 4 p.m.

PRIORITY

JOINT EMBASSY/USOM MESSAGE

EMBTEL 532

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
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Edgar Kaiser and two assistants spent March 14th here discussing Volta River report with Prime Minister and his associates.

At end of day, Prime Minister asked Moffat and me to join group. Prime Minister told us it had been agreed Government of Ghana would have Kaiser undertake immediately certain preliminary work namely further drilling at dam site, engineering and design, access roads, and some housing.

Prime Minister then said Government of Ghana would approach US Government immediately and invite its assistance in "(1) interesting industries which are substantial consumers of electricity in using power generated from the Volta, and (2) working out a plan for financing the construction of the dam and power production at Kosombo"; later I was handed minutes of meeting, last part of which state: "At this point the American Ambassador to Ghana, Mr. Wilson C. Flake, and Mr. A.L. Moffat, Director, United States Operations Mission in Ghana, joined the meeting and the Prime Minister described what had so far been agreed. He re-emphasized his firm intention of proceeding with power development on the Volta River as soon as possible. The Ambassador agreed to convey the Prime Minister's views to the American Government as soon as they had been formally conveyed to him.

"It was confirmed that whilst the United States Government was taking action under paragraph 4 (B) - the financing of the Volta River project - the Government of Ghana would not make separate

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separate approaches to other governments about such financing.

"It was agreed that the Government of Ghana should inform the British and Canadian Governments in general terms of what had been agreed at this meeting.

"It was agreed that copies of the reassessment report could now be released to the aluminium companies and other interested bodies."

At same time Prime Minister handed me letter reiterating that he is "determined to see power generated from the Volta River as quickly as possible for I am convinced that this is an essential factor in the further development of Ghana."

Letter ends as follows: "The Government of Ghana for its part intends to give authority forthwith to the Kaiser Company to carry out certain perliminary works which will be required before the main project can be started. Whilst these preliminary works are being undertaken I hope that the United States could assist Ghana both in seeking to interest industries which would be large consumers of power generated from the Volta River, and also in working out a plan for the financing of the construction of the dam and power installation at Kosombo.

"President Eisenhower has assured me of his interest in this project which can mean so much to Ghana, and my Government would be most grateful for any action which he and the Government of the United States could now take in order to bring the project into operation."

Embassy comment: Kaiser now Paris will be Washington 17th or 18th to discuss subject with Department and ICA. He can furnish details pending arrival Embassy despatch due Department courier pouch about March 23. Kaiser, Moffat and I in full agreement and Moffat and I recommend course Kaiser proposes.

Kaiser made excellent impression on Prime Minister with his straight forward talk which pointed up problems but nevertheless

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gave Prime Minister much hope. Prime Minister told me privately he is absolutely determined to have power project and "after talking with President Eisenhower and Vice President Nixon, I am sure they cannot fail me."

I was as usual noncommittal but I must inform Department that Prime Minister is a determined man in a hurry. He has read much about desire of US Government to assist underdeveloped countries especially in Africa and he regards Volta project as test now that Kaiser report is favorable. Outcome will in my opinion have profound effect on US-Ghana relations and indirectly on US relations with Africa. I therefore feel US Government should press forward earnestly to assist Kaiser's effort bring project to life.

FLAKE

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